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ABSTRACT

This booklet, containing monographs on aspects of multiethnic curriculum in the schools, is intended to aid teachers to keep in touch with some of the strategies and criteria in planning and executing multiethnic programs. An article on new curricula for multiethnic schools notes that most of the urban and suburban schools are racially and ethnically isolated--not multiethnic or multiracial. Consequently, curricula need to be provided for a culturally diverse population which may or may not be in culturally and ethnically diverse schools. A second article explores classroom use of multiethnic material. Here, it is suggested that the teacher's responsibility is to find a means by which he/she can elicit from all youngsters something about themselves and their lives and in this way develop the classroom lesson as a meaningful experience. The development of criteria for evaluating materials dealing with the heritage, culture, and traditions of nonwhite minority groups for racism and sexism is stressed in a third article focusing on racism and stereotyping in textbooks. A final article concludes that a racist and sexist society will reflect these influences in its products. Here, ten quick ways to analyze children's books for racism and sexism are given. (Author/AM)

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Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.

MULTI-ETHNIC CURRICULUM IN THE SCHOOLS

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INSTITUTE FOR URBAN AND MINORITY EDUCATION

MULTI - ETHNIC CURRICULUM

IN THE SCHOOLS

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FOREWORD

Effectively integrating students of various minority groups into the life of the schools is indeed a difficult task. Nevertheless, biases, intolerances, and prejudices must be averted. Efforts to reduce these destructive attitudes and behaviors rest on basic moral and ethical values--the importance and dignity of the individual personality, acceptance of the validity of individual lifestyles, cultures, and perspectives on life.

The curriculum of a school should provide an opportunity for the development of attitudes, values, and behavior conducive to constructive human relationships. In order to achieve this, teachers need helpful and contributive instructional aids and materials.

This booklet, containing monographs on aspects of multi-ethnic curriculum in the schools, was prepared in an effort to keep teachers apprised of some of the strategies and criteria in planning and executing multi-ethnic programs. An understanding of curricular concepts is important for the teacher who is aware of the need to improve human relations in the classroom; such understanding is a step toward the creation of a society where people of differing backgrounds can live harmoniously.

Sula Tyler

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD..... i

NEW CURRICULA FOR MULTI-ETHNIC SCHOOLS..... 1
By Dr. A. Harry Passow,
Jacob H. Schiff Professor of Education,
and Director, Division of Educational Programs,
Teachers College, Columbia University

CLASSROOM USE OF MULTI-ETHNIC SCHOOLS..... 17
By Dr. Warren Halliburton,
Curriculum Specialist, Director of
Educational Services, Teachers College,
Columbia University

RACISM AND STEREOTYPING IN TEXTBOOKS..... 25
By Dr. Beryle Banfield,
Resource Specialist, Council on
Interracial Books for Children

THE GREATER THE OUTPUT THE SUBTLER THE RACISM AND SEXISM..... 31
By Dr. Albert V. Schwartz,
Resource Specialist, Council on
Interracial Books for Children

NEW CURRICULA FOR MULTI-ETHNIC SCHOOLS[1]

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Alice Miel has defined curriculum as a changing assemblage of opportunities for educative experience so that the elements of curriculum which must be ordered and reordered into opportunities for experience are time, space, material and human resources. Thus, the process of curriculum development is one of making many kinds of decisions: what is to be taught, to whom, when, how, under what conditions, by whom, and how the results are to be evaluated. Curricular design decisions are many with respect to the "formal" curriculum. And then, there is the "hidden curriculum."

The hidden curriculum or, as William Kvaraceus calls it, "the subliminal curriculum" is the way of life in the school setting which tells the student how he should behave. It is the curriculum every school has which stems from the particular culture and subcultures of that school and it is a prime determiner of behavior.

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[1] Based on a presentation at a workshop on "Curriculum for Ethnic Minorities" sponsored by the General Assistance Center at Teachers College, Columbia University on January 31, 1975.

Charles Pinderhughes (1967) discusses the importance of the climate or environment as follows:

> What the pupils are learning from one another is probably just as important as what they are learning from the teachers. This is what I refer to as the hidden curriculum. It involves such things as how to think about themselves, how to think about other people, and how to get along with them. It involves such things as values, codes, and styles of behavior. . . .

The kind of climate created in the classroom and the school and the school in its community setting is an important determinant of what children will learn and how they will learn it--as important as the more formal subject matter, the selection of which we give much more attention.

In speaking about "new curricula for multi-ethnic schools," there is an assumption that our schools are indeed multi-ethnic. The facts are that most of our urban and suburban schools are racially and ethnically isolated -- they are not multi-ethnic or multi-racial. Consequently, curricula need be provided for a culturally diverse population which may/may not be in culturally and ethnically diverse schools. One issue which needs examination is the extent to which curricula are similar or different for a culturally diverse student population in contrast to a culturally homogeneous one.

The National Coalition for Cultural Pluralism has defined cultural pluralism as:

> a state of equal co-existence in a mutually supportive relationship within the boundaries or framework of one nation of people of diverse cultures with significantly different patterns of belief, behavior, color, and in many cases with different languages. To

> achieve cultural pluralism, there must be unity with diversity. Each person must be aware of and secure in his own identity, and be willing to extend to others the same respect and rights that he expects to enjoy himself.

The definition suggests curricular strands that deal with (a) ethnic and cultural awareness of one's own identity, (b) understanding of other cultures, and (c) awareness of the nature of racism and sexism as these affect individual and group behavior. It is a definition which has implications for both cognitive and affective development of the individual. While schools must certainly do a far more effective job in the basic skills areas, an education for a culturally pluralistic society must have a broad focus which deals with affective and cognitive development, with personal and interpersonal skills, with an understanding of the individual, of who he is and how he relates to others.

Gerald Weinstein and Mario Fantini (Toward Humanistic Education, 1970) argue that most of our contemporary curriculum reform efforts "have done much to make the process and curriculum structure more significant in terms of academic subjects, but they have not touched the core of the problem: to make the content more personally meaningful, especially for the poor, minority-group child." Specifically, Weinstein and Fantini argue that current curricula lack intrinsic relevance for many children due to:

1. Failure to match teaching procedures to children's learning styles.
2. The use of material that is outside or poorly related to the learner's knowledge of his physical realm of experience.

3. The use of teaching materials and methods that ignore the learner's feelings.

4. The use of teaching content that ignores the concerns of the learners.

Sterling McMurrin describes the cognitive and affective functions of education as being directed toward the knowing and feeling. The cognitive function, he asserts "is directed to the achievement and communication of knowledge." The affective function, on the other hand, "pertains to the practical life -- to the emotions, the passions, the dispositions, the motives, the moral and esthetic sensibilities, the capacity for feeling, concern, attachment or detachment, sympathy, empathy, and appreciation " (Weinstein and Fantini, 1970).

Curricular relevance, Fantini and Weinstein argue, is that which connects the affective or feeling aspect with the cognitive or knowing aspect. The basis for motivation for learning is a recognition of the child's inner concerns and a respect for him as a person -- respect for his needs, wants, concerns, joys, fears, anxieties, hopes and aspirations. By validating the child's experience and feelings, the school tells the child that he knows something and that he is worth something. To connect with the learner, Fantini and Weinstein (1968) urge that curriculum planners move toward a diversified rather than a uniform curriculum, an experiential rather than a symbolistic curriculum, an immediate rather than a remote curriculum, a participating rather than an academic curriculum, a reality-oriented rather than an antiseptic one, a why rather than a what curriculum. They propose schools move toward an affective curriculum as a basis of relating

the cognitive and the affective.

Many curriculum efforts are focused on remediation rather than reconceptualization or redevelopment. As Taba and Elkins put it, remedial measures that simply repeat what students have already failed at are not an answer. Qualitatively different programs are needed. The same general principles of learning, the same learning processes are applicable for all learners. Different emphases, strategies, use of resources are needed but the principles and the processes are basically the same. Remediation measures do not provide adequate substitutes for effective developmental teaching and learning. Taba and Elkins (1966) suggest continual and comprehensive diagnosis of students to ascertain the background of experience, student feelings about school and themselves, their values and basic emotional needs which are unmet and which retard and impede learning, the areas of concern, the concepts students bring to school as providing the basis for curriculum planning.

A balanced program of instruction, Taba and Elkins (1966) propose, must take into account four areas of objectives--knowledge, thinking, attitudes and skills. These four areas need to be pursued simultaneously with different strategies and approaches. Knowledge (acquisition of facts) does not automatically produce a way of thinking with these facts; thinking is an active process, while facts are learned by passive absorption. Attitudes are developed best through experiences and materials which impact on the individual's feelings. Skills are developed primarily through practice, preferably repeated practice of the skills in different

contexts.

Curriculum planners must provide for a wide variety of teaching-learning strategies and materials. The use of a single text, for instance, obviously cannot provide for the range and diversity one finds in any classrroom. As Taba and Elkins (1966) point out, literature can serve many different purposes in a classroom. It can be used for sensitivity training, a means of extending limited experience with human behavior and the problems of human relations. Referring to the disadvantaged, they observe:

> Each individual grows up in a cultural shell because his immediate socializing group, the group, is culturally unique and hemmed in. The avenues to the mainstreams of culture are usually further closed by segregation of residence areas, by marginal existence, and by social isolation. Experiences in such hemmed-in cultural climates tend to cultivate ethnocentricity, in the sense of a tendency to interpret all behavior, values, and motivations in terms of the limitations of these settings, to develop a limited self-concept and either a defeatist or aggressive-hostile orientation toward the future.

Literature provides a means for transmitting values, mores, and ways of behaving essential to maturity. The emotional and intellectual content of literature can have an impact on the lives of youth. As Fred Wilhelms (1961) reminds us:

> Literature is the great repository of insights into the human heart and mind . . . we can select--and help students select--so that our literature courses go straight to the heart of children and adolescents, with their fears and frustrations, their self-doubts, their hopes and their aspirations. We can help youngsters to bring their feelings about themselves into perspective.

There is a wealth of literature which, properly selected, provides relevant content for children and youth at all stages of development and serves other

purposes than simply enabling the student to sound out words. The problem, as Charles Spiegler (1964) puts it, is "to give him a book that hits him where he lives!"

Mildred Dickeman (1973), discussing teacher cultural pluralism, asserts that our schools are racist by design: "Their racism is part of a larger philosophy, an ethnocentrism dedicated to the remodelling of citizens to conform to a single homogeneous acceptable model." Looking at the historical development of education in America, Dickeman concludes that what emerged was a mass system of public indoctrination with two major functions: (1) to create a docile, controllable lower laboring class which adhered sufficiently to the values and myths of the ruling class so that it was not apt to question its place in the society, and (2) to select the few who possessed loyalty and conformity in values, attitudes, behavior and appearance to be chosen as replacements for the elite as needed. Dickeman argues that the public education system is the major social sorting mechanism and the prime means for instilling social control.

Dickeman, as do many other social critics, rejects the notion of America as a "melting pot" because far too many individuals have stuck to the bottom of the pot. A look at the curriculum, she argues, clearly reveals how the schools define and perpetuate the mythology:

> For the last hundred years at least, school texts, in picture and story, in history and literature, have presented this myth to the young. The actors in these texts have been and still are almost exclusively members of the dominant society, Anglo-Saxon, White English-speaking, depicted with dress, manners, customs and family roles all deemed

> acceptably middle class. In those cases where it is essential to refer to and explain the existence of ethnic differences, reference is made to the myth of equal opportunity and the melting pot, or for those at the bottom, assurance is given that the lower orders are happy in their places, the slave on his plantation, the worker in the factory, the Indian roving his reservation.

Such a curriculum, Dickeman maintains, informs every child in the public school that if he is to enter the dominant middle class, he must acquire the characteristics and the behavior of that group and, more important, he must abandon his own heritage -- "whatever differences he possesses, whatever ethnic identity that has characterized his home and family." The curriculum says to the child that his own heritage is irrelevant, teaching him "that nothing which he brings to the school, none of his sociocultural heritage matter."

Dickeman sees most recent curriculum reform presumably designed to eradicate cultural and racial bias lacking in understanding of the racism which permeates the schools and society as a whole with little basic change in the message being communicated.

> Most reforms seem to be modifications of the racial uniformity of success models presented to the child. This has been done most commonly through revision of text materials, and through increased recruitment of minority staff members. Most textual changes of commercial publishers have substituted only biological, not cultural variety. Dick and Jane in blackface or brownface retain all the usual middle-class social and behavioral traits. This, of course, is not cultural pluralism at all but a reiteration of the old ideology that one can succeed even though possessed of deviant biological traits, if one adopts the requisite culture. None of the problems of cultural diversity, alienation and ethnocentrism discussed above have been recognized here.

To relate classroom goals to the cultural pluralism of students and their

communities, Dickeman suggests that the teacher draw on four types of resources: (1) teacher freedom to select and develop curricular materials relevant to student needs; (2) the students themselves--using the students' concerns and life styles in classroom activities so that it becomes "a place where he can learn to express, understand and evaluate the personal and social facts of his existence;" (3) the members of the local communities where such communities are characterized by ethnic diversity since student generated concerns and discussion of their experiences force "all students to focus on each other's ethnic identities and their consequences;" and (4) the teachers themselves who "recognize that their own ethnic heritages are valuable, that their own family histories are relevant to learning and teaching."

Even in schools not populated by racial and ethnic diversity, there is greater opportunity than is usually recognized to achieve these same goals. That opportunity is the unrecognized diversity which can be found within a presumably homogeneous population. Through the exploration of individual differences within groups, students can begin to understand ethnic communities and heritages other than their own.

A 1972 yearbook of the National Council for the Social Studies, Teaching About Life in the City, argues that the "social studies curriculum must focus on and teach about the immediate realities and problems facing human beings in the city. Equally important, we must do all in our power to intervene in vital aspects of our urban environment." It is, of course, not just the social studies curriculum

--but all of our curriculum must be used to teach about life in the city.

In that yearbook, Daniel Levine (1972) points to four important contributions institutions can make in the search for identity by metropolitan man:

> (1) to provide every young person with opportunities to test and define himself against difficult challenges in the physical and social environment; (2) to encourage the development of shared values and sentiments which help the young acquire a sense of authentic reality precisely because they are widely shared; (3) to work toward achieving certain kinds of stability in the physical environment of a rapidly changing urban society; and (4) to offer the young guidance in exploring and experimenting with a variety of identities.

Levine suggests that the social studies curriculum be designed so as to immerse students in the study of urban and metropolitan affairs with experiences "provided in a setting which brings them into close contact with others of differing social, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds." He urges that a larger proportion of the students' learning experiences involve firsthand participation in metropolitan affairs with emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving. To achieve this focus, increased flexibility in scheduling will be needed, especially if greater opportunities are to be provided for youth to perform socially important and personally meaningful work in the community. Levine also urges that students be involved in determining what to learn and how to do it.

Recent proposals for reform in secondary education have advocated increased options for youth and opportunities for studying and working outside the classroom and school walls. Several have endorsed the proposal of the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (1972) committee for an approach called "Action

Learning." Action Learning is defined as "learning from experience and associated study that can be assessed and accredited by an educational institution. It may be in paid jobs, in non-paid volunteer work, or in personal performance . . . ." Surveys of activities which could be categorized under the rubric of action learning indicate that more and more learning experiences are being provided in agencies, institutions, and community settings.

One stream of "new curricula" is focused on teaching a particular ethnic or racial group's experience -- Black Experience, Hispanic Experience, etc.. Black Studies, Puerto Rican Studies, etc. have been developed as a means of providing insight into self and group identity. Such studies must include a carefully planned knowledge base. Teachers must know the basic facts, concepts, generalizations, and theories about ethnic minority groups if they are to design curriculum and instruction about these cultures intelligently. They must be able to recognize and correct the distortions, stereotypes, neglect and racism found in materials of instruction. The knowledge base derives from several sources: ethnic perspective of a group's history, analysis of the social conditions within the ethnic group itself, examination of the group's culture. In addition to a carefully researched knowledge base, an ethnic studies program must have an equally firmly based affective component.

James Banks (1973) has criticized some of the developments in the Black Studies programs which emerged in response to demands for Black history and Black studies:

> Publishers, seeking quick profits, have responded to the Black history movement by producing a flood of textbooks, tradebooks, and multimedia "kits," many of dubious value. Most of the "integrated" materials now on the market are little more than old wine in new bottles, and contain white characters painted brown, and the success of "safe" Blacks such as Crispus Attucks and Booker T. Washington. The problems which powerless ethnic groups experience in America are de-emphasized or ignored.

The reason few programs are soundly conceived and implemented, Banks maintains, is that the goals for such programs are unclear and confused, lacking clear rationales and direction. Banks' statement of purpose for Black history has meaning for all ethnic groups: "The goal of Black history should be to help students develop the ability to make reflective decisions so that they can resolve personal problems and, through social action, influence public policy and develop a sense of political efficacy." Banks' argument is that the acquisition of effective decision-making and social action skills is essential to the physical and psychological liberation of Black Americans--skills which can be employed in solving personal, group, and public problems. Banks suggests that the development of effective political activists is the ultimate goal of social studies for Black students. Certainly this is one dimension of new curricula for ethnic groups and its attainment involves studying the group's experience from both an historical and interdisciplinary perspective.

For large numbers of children and youth, English is not their mother tongue. Alan Exelrod, discussing the targic price of ignoring minority cultures, observes that:

> The Chicano child brings to the school a different culture and language than that of the Anglo. When he comes to school he is often forbidden to speak his native language and his cultural traditions are ignored. Often the school he attends is inferior to the school just down the road attended primarily by Anglos. His academic life is tainted with the prejudice and indifference of Anglo teachers who see little prospect for his academic success. He sees few Chicano teachers and fewer Chicano administrators.

Thus, it is not only the problems of language that many Spanish-speaking children face but those of emotional and social adjustment that stem from the conflict of cultures in such settings. Literature on the Native American --both on the reservation and in the city--describes similar problems of education and mental health.

There has been a significant growth of interest in bilingual education. Frank Cordasco (1973) has pointed to the irony of spending millions of dollars to teach students a foreign language while expending little or nothing to develop a language competency which already is found among students as a result of their cultural backgrounds. In fact, Cordasco points out, "we go to all sorts of trouble to eradicate the child's language and substitute the school's before we begin to teach him. This is more than a contradiction; it is absurd!"

Bilingual education, Cordasco emphasizes, involves instruction in two languages -- the child's mother tongue and English serving as the media of instruction in the curriculum. It involves development of the student's fluency and mastery of English while, at the same time, increasing his competency in his mother tongue.

There are other aspects and dimensions of curricula for multi-ethnic schools

that might be discussed: helping students to clarify their values and those of their cultures, deepening the students' insights into the existence of a web of cultures to which each individual belongs. Education for cultural pluralism cannot be discussed without attending to the racism and sexism which permeates all of our institutions. In our schools, racism and sexism are found in almost every aspect of the ongoing educational activities.

As important as knowledge and concepts are in nurturing cultural pluralism, attitudes and affective behaviors are equally significant. Central to the affective climate is, of course, the teacher who sets the tone and communicates by both his verbal and non-verbal behavior his valuing of the child as an individual who has worth. Staten Webster (1973) suggests that the most essential task facing the teacher is believing sincerely that the child can learn and communicating this faith in the child to him. Webster asserts that the teacher must know the student and his culture and have some idea of and feelings for what it means to be a member of an ethnic or racial minority in America. The teacher must know about the students' perceptions of self, their fears and anxieties, as well as their strengths and personal resources. What the teacher must do, Webster concludes, is to love his students -- love in Eric Fromm's sense of five dimensions: knowing, understanding, respecting, caring, and giving. The teacher loves the child as he comprehends the feelings, attitudes, dreams, aspirations and fears even as these differ from his own. The teacher must respect the child as a person even when the child's values and attitudes differ from his. The teacher cares for the child when he is concerned

about the child's performance and his self-destructive attitudes and behaviors. Finally, Webster says, "the educator must let these behaviors culminate in the ultimate act in the sequence of loving, namely that of giving his talents and himself to the quest that the student will succeed."

Jack D. Forbes (1971) observes that:

> The tide today is beginning to shift away from the whitewashing of cultural differences which prevailed in earlier years, toward a new acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity in society and in the schools. The change will most certainly not be a painless one, for it requires the conscious rethinking by Anglo-Americans of their relationship to other groups with which they share this continent, a number of them indigenous to it. But the change is coming.

Changes are needed in both the formal and informal curriculum, the planned and the subliminal. Changes are needed in content, strategies, resources--but most of all in the people who create the conditions for curriculum and instruction.

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CLASSROOM USE OF MULTI-ETHNIC CURRICULUM

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To be disadvantaged is to be regarded by many teachers with skepticism and often with rejection. I am repeatedly distressed by the fact that in his disregard of youngsters labeled disadvantaged, the classroom teacher often contributes to their alienation, and that when these students fail to respond, a teacher may conveniently interpret this to mean that they have little to contribute. What these youngsters display is a prophecy fulfilling behavior of what they represent to others, never of whom they are. The irony is that given the proper motivation, they have potentially more to contribute to the class than those fulfilling what preconceptions the establishment has of students, as repositories for instruction. The teachers' responsibility, it would seem, is to find a means by which they can elicit from all youngsters something about themselves, their lives and, in this way, develop the classroom lesson as a meaningful experience.

Sometimes the best intentions of teachers prove counterproductive. An example may be cited in a classroom assignment in which children are to "play Indians" -- for the purpose of dramatizing the "Early West" so as to gain a feeling for

that period in American History. Left to their own miseducation, students will invariably act out what they have learned from irresponsible television programs, cheap movies, and mythical story book writings. For all the teacher's honorable intentions, the lesson proves counter productive. Unless the teacher intervenes to correct these practices, he is fostering the many stereotypes about Native Americans.

A large part of the difficulty is that teachers themselves are victims of this miseducation. None of us is immune. The challenge is to constantly rethink, to question and revise what has been too long taken for granted about "other" people in America.

This need for change is perhaps more acute in our social studies curriculum than in any other area, and the pressures here have brought certain reactions. One that comes to mind is the implementation of an age-old educational axiom: start with the children, where they are in interest and experience. It is not always easy, but it is always possible. Although the body politic safeguards against change, teachers have to take a new look at what they have been educated to believe, that is, the notion that all the accomplishments of the United States are by the majority groups of people, many of whom we have made legendary. I am thinking of Kit Carson, for example, who in fact was a notorious white supremacist whose maltreatment of Indians, of their women and children, makes a travesty of his reputation.

In conversations with teachers about changes and additions that need to be

made in the social studies curriculum, they claim they don't have time or room. Where, they ask, are they to include additional information about minorities? The fact is that half of what they are now teaching is of questionable merit if not truth. One way of correcting these distortions of history is to excise them and include in their place information that supports the fact that the "problems" of this country -- [illegible] is the way the minority role is cast -- are perhaps its most vital experiences. This understanding of American history is critical to any real understanding of the country.

An example of the problem may be gleaned from an experience I had years ago in showing teachers how to use a New York City curriculum bulletin, The Negro in America, in their class lessons. The response of those teachers is instructive. They had two questions: "If what the bulletin claims is true, why was I not taught this information?" Implicit in this question was their rejection of black history. Once past that hurdle, there was the other question: "How do I include this information in the curriculum?" What I am suggesting is that no one of us -- no matter what our persuasion -- can presume to be more American than anyone else. All of us are part and parcel of this country and its history. As we recognize this and apprise ourselves of some of the experiences supporting this history, this can become its own motivation to classroom learning. As the teacher internalizes this information, he or she will impart it to students. The results are that students will gain a broader perspective of what is the American experience. Teachers cannot afford to wait any longer in conveying this

information to them, even in those schools where black and white students attend separately. They must start this new concept of learning, whatever the community or composition of the classes.

In school districts across the country I still see age-old practices of teachers inflicting stories as irrelevent as Silas Marner on youngsters--the same teachers who would recoil at the suggestion of teaching Manchild in the Promised Land. Its rejection is symptomatic of the feeling that what occurs in the ghetto is unhealthy and has no place in the classroom. Although much of what occurs in this autobiography of a Harlem youngster who survives by his wits may be questionable in terms of the good life, there is in this book a spark, a courage that reads as a tribute to the human spirit. It should be recognized for its truth and relevance because youngsters can only benefit from sharing these qualities.

I cite Manchild as an example of the type of literature that works in the classroom because it is something that some youngsters either experience or can emphathize with, and all youngsters can benefit from. And in terms of eliciting interest and encouraging children to talk, such literature serves the most reluctant readers where most other printed material fails.

I think that the best teaching is done in the lower grade--the lower the grade, the better the teaching. As we go through the school system, students lose interest, parents become alienated, and the teachers become disenchanted, by and large. This alienation grows with the child as a student, because that boy or that girl is still interested in something, but that something is outside the school. And,

because the practice is for teachers to make their daily pilgrimages into the school community and whisk themselves away at three o'clock, I wonder how much they can know about the youngsters they teach and the communities in which they teach? One way is to linger in the neighborhood and find out what the children do. I would also suggest that the teacher find out from the students about their interests.

Let us pick a subject that appears remote from student interests, but which is required teaching--civil rights, for example. One might ask students to share their understanding of the concept and their rights. Having created this student interest we can easily enlarge the discussion to include the civil rights movement of the Sixties, women's rights, and the Human Rights Doctrine. I am suggesting that the momentum of one discussion can carry students through those lessons prescribed by the curriculum in an interesting way. The starting point is the interests of youngsters outside the classroom, rather than the interests we impose on them inside the classroom.

In observing classrooms I try to understand how the students are interacting with the teacher. What I see is reminiscent of a time past, not only of what was happening when I was a teacher fifteen years ago but, more disappointing, what I was subjected to as a student thirty years ago! Little has changed. The chairs are no longer bolted down and, in some situations, the students sit on the floor. But the same type of instruction is going on. The teacher is still talking <u>at</u> students and, from their subordinate classroom status, students are denied the

opportunity of being heard. I don't think there is anything that interests a person more than what he himself has to say. Given the opportunity and respect of speaking is a motivation to learn that is too often ignored.

With respect to commercial materials in the classroom, it is the teacher's responsibility not only to examine them and judge them but to decide exactly how he or she will use them in the class lesson. Because publishers are equally victimized by the miseducation practiced in our nation's schools, they will continue to produce books that are subject to racial and ethnic biases. We may hope, however, that they are gaining experience and benefits from our growing awarenesses about ethnic and racial minorities, and will enlist the aid of more socially aware authors. The fact that they are using more teachers to write their books, for example, is a sign that they are trying to introduce more expertise and practical experience than previously. Many publishers are also hiring more minority authors whose sensitivities are further helping improve their texts.

But the need for greater change is as great as the changes that have already taken place. I say this remembering the time when I was teaching students of an adjustment class--that is, of reluctant learners. The book assigned to the class by the administration was Cowboy Sam and the Rustlers. Cowboy Sam was ten years old; the students were generally about fifteen. The experiences of Sam were on a ranch in the West of the Thirties and, as such, twice removed from those of my students, living in a ghetto in the Fifties. Compounding our plight was the fact that

most of them had met Sam previously in the fourth grade. They were hostile and resentful at this second meeting, to say the least. After many discouraging go-rounds, I learned to treat Sam with a disregard that emulated that of my students. Our lessons culminated in satirical exercises of ferreting out examples from the story of Sam's "unreal" behavior. It was in this satirism of Sam that I reached these students and they benefited from the reading experience.

The same occurred with Teenage Tales, the first of those readers attempting to address themselves to teenagers. The characters were, of course, white, middle-class types, living behind taller picket fences than Dick and Jane, but in similar suburban circumstances. We compared their lives with the lives of members of the class and, in this way, developed an identity that my students could at least recognize and appreciate.

There have been many books since that time which have come "closer to home." But I have yet to see one that is not above criticism. We do not plan to achieve the millennium, but we should see that we get the best out of what books are available. One way is to raise our own conscious level and realize that we have all been miseducated in some way and to varying degrees and to be alert to learning new facts as well as to unlearning old lies. One way is to elicit ideas from those youngsters we teach. Being young, they see many things that we have grown blind to. If we take the time to listen to what they have to say, they will have as much to teach

them. Such reciprocal learning is revitalizing. Our responsibility is to create an atmosphere that is conducive to this education.

RACISM AND STEREOTYPING IN TEXTBOOKS

Beryle Banfield

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During the decade of the Sixties, as a result of the pressure of minority groups for fuller and more adequate treatment of their heritage and culture, a number of textbooks purporting to answer these demands appeared on the market. In many cases the materials dealing with the heritage, culture, and traditions of non-white minority groups were presented in such a manner as to continue to reinforce and perpetuate negative stereotypes. These materials were thus potentially damaging to all students who were exposed to them. It therefore became necessary to develop criteria for evaluating these materials for racism and sexism and to develop effective teaching strategies to counteract these negative effects.

Whether we like it or not, too often the curriculum is shaped by the content of the textbooks. This makes it critically important that parents, teachers, and administrators become knowledgeable about techniques for detecting racism in both textbooks and trade books. I have identified five areas in which these materials may most easily be examined for evidences of racism and sexism: Historical Backgrounds; Culture and Tradition; Characterization; Language and Terminology; and Illustrations.

Racism, in the treatment of the historical background of minority groups, is reflected by those errors of omission and commission in which the role of the minority group in the development of the United States is inadequately treated, and its history is either distorted or presented from a Eurocentric point of view. In addition, the colonial experience is glorified as having been beneficial to the minority group. Finally, and most important, there is a failure to discuss the achievements of the minority group in developing its own society.

These errors of omission and commission are also reflected in the treatment of the Asian, Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Native American. Since I am most familiar with the heritage and culture of the Afro-American, I shall choose my examples as they relate to that particular group. However, the same principles apply to all groups affected by racism.

The following questions may serve as guidelines for evaluating the treatment of the historical background of Afro-Americans:

1. Does the treatment of the Afro-American begin with his enslaved condition in the United States, or does it begin with a treatment of the African Societies that existed prior to European contact?

2. Is there any discussion of the skills brought by the Africans to this country, such as farming, iron-working, carpentry, masonry, and weaving (all of which helped develop the African States), or is the African depicted as helpless, unskilled, and in need of instruction in these skills by the slave owners?

3. Is the Afro-American's contribution to vital periods of American history, such as the American Revolution, the War of 1812, clearly defined? For instance, in the treatment of the Reconstruction period is there discussion of the role of the newly

freed slaves in developing laws which sought to establish free universal education and extend the right of suffrage?

In evaluating the treatment of the culture and tradition of minority groups the following questions might prove helpful:

1. Are the culture, customs, and traditions of the minority group treated with respect or as exotica?

2. Are the members of the minority group viewed as people without belief systems or without a set of values which shape their philosophies and undergird their customs? If these traditions and customs are discussed, are they dealt with in such a manner as to leave the impression that they are in some way undesirable or inferior?

Great attention must be paid to the manner in which the characters of minority group members are developed and the types of situations in which they are portrayed. It is in this area that we find evidences not only of the most blatant types of racism, but also some instances that are so subtle that they may not easily be detected. Racism in this area usually takes the following forms:

1. Use of descriptions and situations that reinforce negative stereotypes, i.e. happy-go-lucky, treacherous, inscrutable.

2. The incorrect portrayal of minority groups as accepting of an inferior status in American society, i.e. the docile, contented slave.

3. Use of the "blame the victim" tactic which ascribes the disadvantages suffered by minority groups to their inherent shortcomings.

4. Acceptance of only those individuals who have made it in terms of the Eurocentric value system as being worthy of textbook treatments.

These questions may be of value in evaluating the characterization of

minority groups:

> Are the families of minority groups portrayed as being unable to make judgements or decisions about important affairs in their lives without the aid and assistance of a person of the white majority?
>
> Is the minority group member portrayed as an individual of superior attainment in one field who must demonstrate this superiority in order to win acceptance by the white majority?
>
> Is the minority group member portrayed as one who despises his own culture and therefore seeks to adopt the European culture?
>
> Is the minority group family portrayed as being beset by extreme pathology?

Language may be used to degrade minority groups in two ways: (1) the speech may be presented in such distorted fashion as to indicate the author's intent to portray the person as one of inferior status; and (2) quite often a "jingle" in a broken tongue is used to indicate the speech of the Afro-American. Yet many Afro-American writers have made exquisite use of the speech used by some Afro-Americans. Writers such as Eloise Greenfield in She Come Bringing Me That Baby Girl and John Steptoe in Stevie have caught the color and imagery of some Afro-Americans' speech patterns. June Jordan in His Own Where, a novel for teenagers, has brought this speech to the level of poetry. These writers have captured the speech accurately in terms of pattern, form, rhythm, and imagery. There is no distortion and no degradation of the speech or of the individuals portrayed.

The use of incorrect terminology also degrades members of minority groups. What is called a civil war in a European country becomes a tribal war in an

African nation. Textbooks are replete with references to the Zulu and Ashanti tribes rather than the Zulu and Ashanti nations.

In 1968 the UNESCO Committee against Racism in Education and Textbooks suggested that the following words be eliminated from textbooks: tribe, native, savage, primitive, jungle, pagan, kaffir, bushmen, backward, uncivilized, and Negro.

Once aware of the areas in which racism may be present in textbooks and tradebooks, it becomes incumbent upon teachers, parents, and administrators to seek to develop proper strategies to counteract the effects of such racism.

We at the Council on Interracial Books for Children are not book burners. We also recognize that expensive textbooks bought with the honest intentions of meeting the needs of minority group students cannot easily be replaced. It is, however, possible to use this potentially damaging material in a positive and constructive way. We recommend that the racist material be used in such a manner as to heighten and develop the students' powers of critical thinking, thus actually providing the students with better education. Here, briefly, are suggestions for dealing with the concept of "tribe" as applied to the Ashanti: The teachers might lead the students to examine these mechanisms, created by the founders of the Ashanti nation, as a means of welding the people together as well as the role of each in accomplishing this task--a national symbol, a national capital, a national holiday, a constitution, and an army. The students may then examine the concept of "tribe" as it is usually thought of when referring

to African peoples: "a local division of a primitive or barbarous people."

Using the following definition, more mature students might want to examine the validity of applying the term "tribe" to African peoples such as the Hausa, Yoruba, Ashanti, and not to the Slaves, Scots, or Welsh.

> tribe: "any aggregate of people united by ties of descent from a common ancestor; community of customs and traditions; adherence to the same leaders; etc." (American College Dictionary)

Of course this approach raises another problem. How does the teacher get information concerning the rich history and culture of non-white minorities? This points up the necessity for the teachers to become aware of the kinds of materials that would give them the information needed to create lessons that would counteract racist materials. Otherwise, by default, the shaping of the curriculum will lie in the hands of textbook writers and publishers.

THE GREATER THE OUTPUT
THE SUBTLER THE RACISM AND SEXISM

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Five areas which have been indentified by Dr. Banfield as purveyors of racism and sexism are aspects of the cultural-communication context. They are all projects of human production, but they are not all necessarily in the control of any one human.

For the longest time we lacked a true perspective on racism. We dealt with it solely as a function of prejudice and solely as resultant of individual practices. The impact of society and our technological world was left untouched, unscathed, unchanged.

Racism is not the same thing as prejudice. Prejudice is a part of the definition--white, false superiority versus Black, false inferiority. Racism is definable as prejudice plus power--creating the equation, White over Black. Power is the more significant and the more nefarious part of racism. It permits every white person to benefit from racism. It provides, in a most unfair way, leverage to an entire group while at the same time sacrificing, denigrating, another whole group. In a world where there should be sharing it sets up a conflict-competition scheme in which there are pre-determined groups of winners and losers. Three different types of racism have been identified: institutional racism, cultural racism, and personal racism.

Institutional racism is operative in the mechanisms which hold our society together -- the forces of production perhaps more readily idenfifiable as the "establishment." Our government, our schools, our publishing industry, our subways are all examples of institutions, and in every institution in our nation there is racism and sexism at work on every identifiable level.

Cultural racism -- where the concerns of multi-ethnic textbooks and anti-sexist books fall -- operates within human communication systems. The Story of Little Black Sambo by Helen Bannerman provides a prime example of cultural racism. As a work, Sambo, became most offensive to Blacks; its use portrayed a ridiculous figure of the old minstrel shows, and the illustrations for the book became the prototype for drawings of the Black family as a sub-human group.

Cultural racism includes a number of groups of persons in this society: Chicanos are often depicted in situational settings of fiestas or siestas -- the adjectives "cute," "queer," and "quaint" were frequently used to describe them; Native Americans are always the "noble savages," "standing straight as an arrow," or "running fast as a deer" and maligned by Mark Twain's "Injun Joe" characterization; The Five Chinese Brothers, as described by Bishop and Wiese, were stereotyped with yellow skin and slanty eyes; Puerto Ricans are generally characterized as devoid of culture, discovered by Columbus, incapable of intellectual pursuits, and a group whose adolescents, according to Patricia Sexton, spend all their time occupied with sex.

Women, too, have been distorted and stereotyped in literature -- if and when they are not entirely omitted. Third world women, in particular, have been

stereotyped, their character distorted, and virtually omitted from books, even those which claim to speak of the heritage of women rarely include any of the activities and/or achievements of third world women.

The third and last level of racism is Personal racism. It is on this level that prejudice is individualized and most obviously harms the perpetrator. The study, Authoritarian Personality, by Adorno and others, points out how prejudices pal around in groups, are part of a syndrome which may control the individual more than is realized. The sublety of racism in books within recent times is exemplified by writers and publishers who should be aware of everything they are saying and, as such, should be able to eliminate the racism in literature. However, this is not so, for we have all been victims of the inculcation of racism and sexism of our society, and when we attempt to change the culture we carry this Achilles heel with us--racism and sexism simply appear in a different format. This is a level best left to each of us to work on ourselves. Only we can change ourselves. Only we are responsible for ourselves.

Let us look at The Earth: Regions and Peoples (Globe: 1972) by L. Abramowitz and J. Abramowitz, a third grade social studies textbook. The cover shows a white man in white shirt and white tie in front of a factory; below him is a semicircle of third world men. The third world men are all stereotypes: the African is bare-chested, carrying a spear; the Arab looks like a fugitive from a Hollywood studio make-up department. And what people are missing? Women! Are there no women as "Peoples of the Earth?" What concept is conveyed by this nonverbal image of the absence of women? What message do children receive from

the cover? A child will be taught and tested by a teacher using this book. Is it too far-fetched to assume that the child who fails is actually far ahead of the child who learns what this book has to teach? At first glance the stereotyping is subtle, but on further consideration it is quite discernible. But if it is obvious, why is the book used in so many schools? Why do publishers still produce it? Who benefits from cultural racism? The children?

Probing further into the subleties of racism of the 1970 s, let us look at an "old favorite," Mary Poppins. According to the author, P.L. Travers, she decided to make changes in her book so that no child would be hurt by anything she had written.

First, let us look at the original, written in 1934. The selection comes from the chapter "Bad Tuesday" in which Mary takes Jane and Michael on a trip to the four corners of the compass:

> Beneath the palm-trees sat a man and a woman, both quite black all over and with very few clothes on. But to make up for this they wore a great many beads -- some hung round their heads just below great crowns of feathers, some in their ears, one or two in their noses. Beads were looped about their necks and plaited bead belts surrounded their waists. On the knee of the negro lady sat a tiny black piccaninny with nothing on at all. It smiled at the children as its Mother spoke.
>
> "Ah bin 'specting you a long time, Mar' Poppins," she said smiling. "You bring dem chillun dere into ma li'l house for a slice of water-melon right now. My, but dem's very white babies. You wan' use a li'l bit black boot polish on dem. Come 'long, now. You'se might welcome.
>
> And she laughed, loud happy laughter, as she got up and began to to lead the way towards a little hut made entirely of palm-trees.
>
> Jane and Michael were about to follow, but Mary Poppins held them back.

> "We've no time to stay, unfortunately. Just dropped in as we were passing, you know. We've got to get round the world---" she explained to the two black people, who lifted up their hands in surprise.
>
> "You got some journey, Mar' Poppins," said the man, smiling and rubbing the end of his great club along his cheek as he looked at her with his sparkling black eyes.
>
> "Roun' de world! My, but you'se better be gettin busy, yas?" said his wife. She laughed again, as though the whole of life were one huge joke, and while she was laughing Mary Poppins moved the compass and said in a loud, firm voice, "East!"[1]

Each line is packed with insulting images; the book is an example of literary racism at its worst. Now let us look at the same passage in the new, revised, post-civil rights version of 1973:

> Under the palm-trees sat a man and a woman as black and shiny and plump as ripe plums, and wearing very few clothes, but to make up for this they wore a great many beads. Some hung round their ears; there were one or two in their noses. They had necklaces of coloured beads and belts of plaited beads round their waists. And on the knee of the dark lady sat a tiny plum-black baby with nothing on at all! It smiled at the children as its Mother spoke.
>
> "We've been anticipating your visit, Mary Poppins," she said, smiling. "Goodness, those are very pale children! Where did you find them? On the moon?" She laughed at them, loud happy laughter, as she got to her feet and began to lead the way to a little hut made of palm-leaves. "Come in, come in and share our dinner. You're all as welcome as sunlight."
>
> Jane and Michael were about to follow, but Mary Poppins held them back.
>
> "We've no time to stay, unfortunately. Just dropped in as we

1. P.L. Travers, Mary Poppins, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1934), pp. 92-93.

> were passing, you know. We've got to get round the world," she explained. And the black people flung up their hands in surprise.
>
> "That's some distance, Mary Poppins," said the man, his dark eyes looking doubtful as he rubbed his cheek with the end of the big club he was carrying.
>
> "Round the world! That's all the way from here to there! You'll wear out your shoes," his wife cried. She laughed again as if this, and everything else in the world, were one huge happy joke. And while she was laughing Mary Poppins moved the compass and cried in a loud, firm voice, "East!"[2]

What are the differences? Is one less racist than the other? Are old racist images replaced by new racist images? The hypothesis I pursued was: Can a racist book be changed into a non-racist book? And an analysis of the passage seems to indicate that a story conceived in racism will remain drenched in racism no matter how it is rewritten; the syndrome of racism continues to exist and permeate any attempts at change.

Ten Quick Ways to Analyze Children's Books For Racism and Sexism

The Council on Interracial Books for Children has developed ten guidelines as a starting point for analyzing books:

1. Check the Illustrations:

   Look for the stereotypes, not only for characterizations of Blacks as "Sambos," but also for descriptions of Chicanos as sombrero-wearing

2. P.L. Travers, Mary Poppins (New York: Harcourt Brace and Janovich (Voyager), 1973), pp. 92-93.

peons, of Asian-Americans as yellow-skinned and slant-eyed, of Native Americans as naked savages with women who are insultingly called "squaws," and depictions of Puerto Ricans as gang members.

2. Check the Story Line

Are the minority people considered problems? Are the problems solved by the benificence of whites? Are whites always in charge? Are men always in charge?

3. Look at the Lifestyles

Are the customs and traditions of minorities depicted as what Beryle Banfield has called exotica? Are minorities depicted as exclusively from ghettoes, barrios, or migrant camps?

4. Weigh the Relationships Between People

Are minority families treated as though they were "matriarchal" and fatherless? Is there a connotation of disrespect between young and old?

5. Note the Heroes and Heroines

Are the definitions of "hero" and/or "heroine" from the minority group's perspective? Or are they defined by majority group members' standards?

6. Consider the Effects on a Child's Self-Image

Are descriptions of what is "normal" established which will limit the child's aspirations or delimit the child's self-concepts? Leaving

a child with cynical, anti-social feelings is not a desirable effect.

7. Consider the Author's or Illustrator's Background

Analyze the biographical material on the jacket flap or the back of the book. Is the author qualified? This is a critical assessment in the area of textbooks.

8. Check the Author's Perspective

Is the author presenting a middle-class or Eurocentric or ethnocentric point of view as universal? Does the author have authoritative scholarship to back up points of view, or is the author opinionating?

9. Watch for Loaded Words

Some words may be accepted automatically, even though they trigger insulting overtones. Ossie Davis discussed the connotations of the words "black" and "white" in "The English Language is my Enemy." A UNESCO report warns us of the implications of such words as savage, primitive, conniving, lazy, superstitious, treacherous, wily, tribe, hut, jungle, and backward. Additionally, be careful of terms which ignore women, such as chairman or fireman or manmade.

10. Look at the Copyright Date

Books on minority themes--usually hastily conceived--suddenly began appearing in the mid-1960's. There followed a growing number of "minority experience" books to meet the new market demand, but most of these were still written by white authors, edited by white

editors, and published by white publishers. They reflected a white point of view. Only very recently, in the late 1960 s and early 1970 s, has the children's book world begun to even remotely reflect the realities of a multi-racial society. And it has just begun to reflect the concerns of women.

In conclusion I should like to say that we have all been influenced by a racist and sexist society and our products will reflect that image. Hence, we must keep in touch with new revelations, new insights, and new research. What is said today will only carry us for a short time; our short-sightedness might and should be pointed out to us tomorrow. Perhaps in this way, racism and sexism in our institutions and culture will not be carried into future times.